

DISCOURSE

UPON THE

INTERMEDIATE STATE,

BETWEEN THE

DEATH of Men and the RESURRECTION
of their Bodies,

Which is to be followed by the

UNIVERSAL JUDGEMENT.

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THE SECOND EDITION.

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2 PETER II. 9.

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptations, and to reserve the Unjust unto the day of judgement to be punished.

SECTION I.



WHOSOEVER has any tolerable knowledge of the holy Scripture, and of the nature of his immortal Soul; as well as of its innate wonderful faculties and activity, must be convinced that there will be an intermediate state between his Death and the Resurrection of his Body, which will come to pass just before the universal Judgement. Now, what that intermediate state is with respect to good and bad people, righteous and wicked men, reason can give us but little light into; but the holy Scripture, and our own observations within ourselves, and the experience of others, may give us a great deal of light into it.

LET us then but seriously reflect upon ourselves, and consult our own experience, and the experience of others; especially of those, who, by their conversations and intimate acquaintance with good, sincere, upright, and pious people, find

Phil. i. 23, 24.
25.

them the foretaste of Heaven, and the longing there was in David, when he cried out, *As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God!* and in St Paul, who saith to the Philippians, *I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.* O what struggle was there within that blessed Apostle! the strongest desire moved him towards his being with his Lord Jesus; but Charity, that most excellent and noble virtue, got the better, and made him be content to continue here below with his brethren, for their furtherance and joy of Faith.

The case of some
despairing people.

If my readers have not had occasion to enter into any deplorable case of their own, nor opportunity to enter into the dismal cases of some despairing people, let them ask those who have; especially *them*, whose character and bounden duty engage them to enter deeply into their cases, in order to bring them out of their distresses, with the divine assistance. They will tell you, that they found these very unhappy people had no rest either day or night. They were continually so tormented within themselves, that they declared, they verily thought Hell could not be a worse punishment than that which they felt.

Now, may not one say, that these poor wretched creatures carry hell along with them, whither-soever they go? Variety of objects, and the endearments of their kindred and their nearest relations, the tenderness of their bosom-friends, and the intimacy of their particular acquaintance, do not avail to divert their minds from the dismal objects that occupy them.

INTERMEDIATE STATE

SECTION II.

THIS, and the felicity of rational creatures, as well as their preservation, may be accounted for by the aid of divine revelation in this manner.

How this
and the case
good people,
be accounted for

THERE are three divine presences, without which no creature whatever can possibly be preserved, and be truly happy.

First, **G**OD's presence all over the universe; without which, that whole universe would be presently annihilated with all it contains.

Secondly, His gracious presence; that brings in all manner of blessings, great and little, according as his infinite wisdom directs.

And *Thirdly*, His wrathful presence; that inflicts punishments proportionable to the delinquencies or offences committed.

THE first presence is absolutely necessary for the preservation of all creatures whatever.

THE Second is as requisite for all the degrees of felicity and glory which creatures do enjoy.

As for the third, the divine justice requires it, for the punishment of the disobedient to his laws, and that order may be kept every where and for ever among all rational beings, endued each of them with a free will.

THIS distinction concerning the three divine presences, makes it very easy to conceive, how all creatures good and bad do subsist, and how the good ones are happy and the bad ones miserable.

ACCORDING to the eternal decrees of the almighty Governor of the whole universe, all intelligent creatures are to be preserved; but those only, who by their free will choose to be true and faithful to their Creator, Preserver, and constant Benefactor, are to enjoy his gracious presence,

there is now great joy, and there will be when the Judgement is over, *fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore*. The others, who out of their free will and pleasure chose to depend upon themselves; and so shook off the dependance upon the ORIGIN of their beings, their supreme Lord and Master, have entirely forfeited his gracious presence, without which there can be no true happiness; and have incurred, by their selfishness and pride, the utmost misery: for it is impossible for any creature to avoid being miserable, without some degrees of the gracious presence of God, and much more miserable with his wrathful presence.

How great difference there is between intelligent creatures, who out of their own accord refused to depend upon their Creator for their welfare, and other intelligent creatures deluded by subtle fiends.

Now a great difference ought to be put between rational creatures endued with free will, who out of pride and mere selfishness reject their Creator, absolutely refusing to depend upon him for their welfare, and other rational creatures, who unhappily were seduced, or rather suffer themselves to be seduced, by their subtle, insinuating, deceitful, and perfidious fiends. So God did at first put a great difference between the Devil and the seduced man; for he left the one to his reprobate mind, and passed sentence upon him; but he took pity on the other, and made him his most gracious promise, that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent; that is, should destroy the Devil, and his empire over mankind: which has been actually executed in great part by our Lord JESUS, and will be fully executed at the last Judgement.

As the felicity of rational creatures consists in their being in, and their enjoying more or less God's gracious presence; so does their unhappiness consist in their being deprived of

WHAT I have said hitherto shews plainly, that as the felicity of rational creatures consists in their being in, and their enjoying more or less God's gracious presence; so does their unhappiness and misery consist in their being deprived of it, and in their undergoing his wrathful presence more or less. Now how God is pleased to deal with the impeni-

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Impenitent sinners in this intermediate state, between Death and the last Judgement, are not standing the full satisfaction given to his divine justice, by his only begotten Son for all sins: we cannot well tell. However, if they be at all blessed with his gracious presence, it is in all probability in low degrees, in degrees proportionable to their impenitency and wickedness. But as to true, penitent, and good people, there is no doubt concerning their enjoyments of the divine gracious presence, both of the Father and of the Son, their most glorious HEAD JESUS CHRIST, in proportion to the degrees of their penitency, and of the charity, righteousness, and piety which they have practised in this world, soon after they are departed this life. I say soon after, because there are several instances both in the Old and New Testaments, of people being raised from the dead, and enjoying afterwards this life again.

Now if they had been introduced immediately after the separation of their souls from their bodies, into the gracious presence of GOD and of their Lord JESUS, their returning to, and their being confined again in their bodies, in order to be separated a second time, had been looked upon by them, not as a favour, but rather as an injury done to them. Witness *St Paul*, who was only caught up to the third heaven, whether in the body or out of the body, he could not tell; he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words. I said, witness *St Paul*, for how desirous he was ever since to depart and to be with CHRIST, he tells us himself. If *Lazarus's* soul then, whom his blessed Lord loved, had enjoyed during the space of four days the gracious presence of GOD, had his soul been pleased to leave that most desirable presence, full of joy and contentment, to return into this sorrowful and miserable

2 Cor. xii. 2, 3,

Phil. i. 23.

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able world? The same question may be asked of all those who were raised from the dead. We may then reasonably presume, that the departed souls are not immediately introduced into the gracious presence of God, at least the separated souls that were to return into their bodies, but were under the invisible guardianship of some angels.

SECTION III.

Proofs that the true penitents departed enjoy the gracious presence of God, and of our Lord and Saviour.

Luke xxii. 42, 43.

John xiv. 2, 3.

Matt. xxii. 32.

IT has been said above, that as to the true penitent and good people departed, there is no doubt but their souls enjoy the gracious presence of God, and of our blessed Lord and Saviour; for there are many obvious passages of Scripture to prove it. *To day*, said JESUS CHRIST to one of the malefactors that was crucified with him, and besought him to be remembered when he should come into his kingdom, *to day shalt thou be with me in paradise.* Before he left this world, he told his disciples, *I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also.* Does not God call himself the *God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob?* God, says our blessed Lord, *is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living.* And since he is most certainly the God of all souls, whether united to bodies or separated from them, they are therefore all living; and so they are all blessed with his gracious presence, or deprived of it by a just judgement, and left to their reproaching consciences, that continually lay before them their follies and wickednesses, their evil thoughts, words, and actions, in the presence of their inveterate enemies, that do not cease to insult over their calamities, which they have drawn upon themselves, and over the loss of their great Creator's innumerable favours, and of the abundant

Grace,

Grace, which the Redeemer of mankind has purchased by his infinite merits for the true penitents, and the workers of righteousness; by which Grace, if they had made a good use of it, they might have been raised to a very high pitch of glory, and have enjoyed for ever an unspeakable felicity. This is part of the deplorable state all the impenitent wicked souls from the beginning of the world to our time have been in, and shall be in till the last judgement, as it may be easily gathered from the holy Scripture. As they are gone impure, for want of a true repentance for their sins, out of this world, so shall they continue impure in the next till their Resurrection. *They that plow wickedness reap the same*, either in this life or in the next, and frequently in both. *The wicked is reserved to the day of destruction. God is angry with the wicked. The wicked shall fall into mischief. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked. Wo to the wicked, it shall be ill with him. There is no peace, says the Lord, unto the wicked.*

Job iv. 8.

Job xxi. 30.

Psalms vii. 11.

Prov. xxiv. 16.

Psalms xxxii. 10.

Isaiah llii. 11.

xlvi. 22.

SECTION IV.

NOW it will be quite otherwise with true penitents, who forsake their sins and work righteousness; because by the most gracious promise of God, they have a claim to the merit of the most precious blood of the IMMACULATE LAMB, their blessed Lord JESUS; and accordingly they apply it to themselves, and are by degrees perfectly cleansed from the spots of their sins, and their guilt is quite done away. By that application they begin to receive here the benefit of it; for their consciences grow easier and easier, and at last, when they go out of this world, they are quite easy; so that their consciences have nothing to reproach them with. They are the blessed, whose

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Psal. cxlii. 1, 2.

transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered; unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. Wherefore they depart this life, and enter into the next clean and pure, through that most precious BLOOD.

THUS are they admitted into the gracious presence of God, and of his only begotten Son, whereinto they are received with the greatest joy by the holy angels, and the blessed souls departed before them; with whom they immediately enjoy such a glory, such an happiness, as are unutterable, and shall continue to enjoy both till the Resurrection of their bodies, to which they shall be united again, and till the last Judgement. After it, they shall change their happy and glorious states, into others incomparably happier and more exalted, when their most glorious H E A D shall lead them to, and introduce them into the kingdom of the supreme Governor of the whole universe, amidst the loudest Allelujahs, praise ye the Lord.

The case of the wicked, or impenitent sinner.

ON the contrary, the wicked, who instead of easing their consciences from the dismal burden of their past sins, neglect or reject the application of our Lord's most precious blood by their faith in him, through which they might have been cleansed from their filthiness, do load them more and more with others; when their time of departing this life is come, they find themselves under an insupportable burden, and exposed to the bitterest reproaches of their consciences, not only for having committed so many heinous sins, but also for having neglected by their incredulity or want of faith in the Redeemer of mankind, or rejected the inestimable benefit of his most precious BLOOD, through which they might have done away their guilt; and so have unloaded themselves by degrees

degrees of the exceeding grievous burden of their sins.

Now, how much the almighty Judge will let loose the inveterate Enemy of mankind upon these impenitent departed souls, in order to torment them in the intermediate state, between their separation from their bodies and their re-union to them; it may be supposed, it will be according to the number and heinousness of their sins: and how far the GRACE of redemption, or the benefit of atonement for all sins will be extended in their wretched cases, we cannot tell. It is a secret hid in God from us. We must then leave that to the infinite divine MERCY. However, we may say thus far, that as the blessed departed souls most earnestly wish for their being re-united to their bodies by their glorious resurrection, and for the last Judgement, that their whole persons, souls, and bodies, may be introduced into the kingdom of God, in order to enjoy its inexhaustible treasures, its ineffable felicity, and its everlasting glory: so the wicked departed souls will exceedingly dread the Resurrection of their bodies, and the last Judgement. For what can those sinful souls expect then, but to be still more miserable, by partaking of the misery of their bodies at their re-union? And what can they expect at the last Judgement, but to see and hear an almighty Judge incensed against them, but to be covered with the greatest shame and utmost confusion? What can they expect, but an increase, a dreadful increase of eternal woes and torments?

THESE indeed might be most justly inflicted upon them, were they to be considered only in themselves; but they shall be then considered in the IMMACULATE LAMB, *who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification*; who ascended into heaven, and sat on the right

The vast difference there will be after Death between the righteous and the wicked.

right HAND of GOD the Father almighty, in order to intercede for all guilty mankind. So they shall find, that the divine justice is fully satisfied, and that the divine goodness and mercy, far from being restrained by that justice, have a free scope and an immense latitude, which will extend even to them. The supreme judge will indeed reprove them severely for their want of charity, and upon that account he will bid them *depart* from HIM. Now, as the angels carry in this present world the good souls that depart from their bodies, into *Abraham's bosom*, or into Paradise; so our most gracious HEAD JESUS CHRIST will lead in the next world the blessed into the BOSOM OF GOD THE FATHER, into the eternal kingdom of the Almighty, wherein their felicity and glory shall be compleated, and shall endure to all eternity.

SECTION V.

I Have of late seriously reflected upon what our blessed Lord said to the seventy, whom he had sent to preach the Gospel, and to heal the sick; he said to them, after they were returned full of joy, because they had found themselves not only able to heal the sick, but also to cure, at the name of their divine Master, those that were possessed of devils; *Lord*, said they with joy, *even the devils are subject unto us through thy name*. His answer was this very remarkable one; *He said to them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven*. By these words we may perceive, that at the thunder, or at the preaching of the gospel, the Devil, called the prince of the air, was brought down as quick as lightning. That foul and detestable fiend could not endure the sound of it, because it hindered him from imposing upon mankind,

Luke x. 17, 18.

Our blessed Lord's answer to the seventy, whom he sent to preach the Gospel, and to heal the sick, at their return full of joy.

kind, which is the greatest delight of that malignant and spiteful spirit.

I beheld; as if he had said, I foresaw at the sending you forth to preach the Gospel, that the Devil's kingdom, his dominion over the wills of men, should shake, and his power over them should be ruined by the power of the Gospel; and that his influence and efficaciousness for promoting idolatry, and all manner of vices, should vanish like a flash of lightning; as it actually did soon after. Then our blessed Lord added, *Be-*

Luke x. 19, 20.

bold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; notwithstanding, rejoice not in this, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. "As if, says a modern author, CHRIST had told them, Go forth again in this armour of power, with which I have girt you, and assure yourselves you shall be sword free and shot free. Nothing shall hurt you, no stratagem shall be able to overcome you. No protection, no assistance shall be wanting to any of CHRIST'S ministers, if they do but trust in him. *He will be with them alway, unto the end of the world.*" We have an express command to resist the Devil, the most inveterate enemy of mankind and of JESUS CHRIST'S blessed kingdom; and a very encouraging promise both here and in St James's epistle: *Resist the devil, and he will fly from you.* This Apostle knew that by experience. *Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not,* says our blessed Lord.

Matt. xxviii. 20.

James iv. 7.

THIS caution was very proper, lest they should be puffed up with pride, on account of the great power with which they were endued, as Lucifer was with the high state he found himself in, and the great power he had received of his Creator; which

A very proper caution given to the seventy disciples, attended with an admirable instruction for us concerning pride,

which caused his fall from heaven. This affords us an admirable instruction, which is, that when we are favoured by God with extraordinary spiritual graces and temporal blessings, we ought to be more cautious against the detestible sin of pride, which has undone so many myriads (ten thousand each) of angels, and has brought, and does bring so many mischiefs upon a world of men; *but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.* As mens names are written in heaven, when they are converted from vice to virtue, *so are they blotted out of the book of life,* when they turn their backs from virtue to vice.

THIS is another good caution to men, let them be never so eminent in virtue, righteousness, and piety. Nothing but a constant humility and frequent prayers for the divine assistance, can keep them in that happy and most desirable state.

Query, Whether a serious believer of the Gospel can believe, that the Devil, like a triumphing conqueror of mankind, shall be permitted to drive captive before him most of them into Hell, in the very presence of their Redeemer.

AFTER what has been said, I ask any true and serious believer of the Gospel, whether he can believe that the old serpent's bruised head, that Satan, whom our Lord beheld as lightning fall from heaven at the preaching of the Gospel by the seventy disciples; I ask him, whether he can really believe, that however, after the last Judgement, he shall, like a triumphing conqueror of mankind, drive captive before him, in the very presence of our omnipotent Redeemer, and of all the holy angels; if not almost all men, however very few excepted comparatively, he shall drive them captive into Hell, the place of everlasting torments; notwithstanding the Gospel says expressly in several places, that mankind in general, all men, every one of them, shall be saved by the most meritorious sacrifice which the beloved Son of God has offered to the divine justice for the atonement of all their sins?

WERE

WERE it to be so, should not the most inveterate Enemy of mankind, and of their most glorious HEAD, get a vast deal the better of their most loving FRIENDS, GOD the Father, who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son for their Salvation; GOD the Son, who took upon himself, not only the work of their redemption, but also to purchase unto them the most glorious and most happy kingdom of heaven; and GOD the Holy Ghost, who has been, and is, and will be graciously pleased to undertake to be their director, their sanctifier, their comforter, and their supporter in the way to eternal salvation, even to endless glory and never ceasing felicity? Far from it; at that most solemn day, he (the Devil) will be covered with the utmost confusion and unexpressible shame, in seeing himself left only with the Old man, his creature, with all his dismal, deformed, and frightful gangs, all sorts of Vices, hatched by him in unwary hearts: In which the New man, created by our Lord JESUS CHRIST, with all his precious seed, all manner of Virtues, will at last by the blessed, for ever blessed influence of the Holy Spirit, who, through his omnipotent GOODNESS entertains and cherishes that most precious seed, till it opens and comes to everlasting light: That New man, with his blessed Issue, I say, will get the better at last, notwithstanding all the struggles and the efforts of the Old man, and his vile detestable parent, the devil, and all his devices.

At the last Judgment the devils shall be covered with the utmost confusion.

BUT that those who have and shall shut their ears to the remonstrances and admonitions, checks and reproofs of that faithful monitor strictly united to their consciences, in order to hearken to the pressing solicitations of the messenger of Satan, the Old man, and shall yield to them; those, I say, shall most certainly be severely punished

The impenitent sinners shall undoubtedly be punished, either during this life, or in the intermediate state.

2 Pet. iii. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Col. iii. 3, 4.

That the souls departed are not in a state of insensibility.

nished even by their glorious HEAD, their blessed REDEEMER, either in this life, as the Jews his murderers were at the terrible destruction of *Jerusalem* by their wicked factions, and by the means of the *Romans*. And if his punishments here are not effectual for the working of their repentance, they shall undoubtedly be punished in the intermediate state between their Death and the Resurrection; and perhaps their punishment will be increased at the general conflagration *St Peter* speaks of in one of his Epistles; but after the last Judgement, when there will be, according to that Apostle, *new heavens and a new earth, wherein righteousness shall dwell*; then both shall ring and resound of nothing but acclamations, of Allelujahs, praise ye the Lord.

SECTION VI.

ST Paul tells the true Christians, that with respect to a corrupt, wicked, and worldly life, they are *dead*, as their bodies shall be when their souls shall be separated from them; that their *life is hid with Christ in God*, and that *when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in glory*. This Scripture shews evidently, that the souls departed are not in a state of insensibility or drowsiness, as some assert. They subsist, though hid. But where are they hid? This Apostle tells us, *they are hid with Christ in God*. Now GOD is life itself, and nothing dead can possibly be hid and subsist in him; and so we may truly affirm, that though our life shall be hid after our Death, yet it will be actually and vitally subsisting with CHRIST in GOD; subsisting much happier, more nobly, and with greater vigor than it can here. This Scripture does farther evidence, that the departed soul of a righteous person,

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person, is not only under the protection and the guardianship of GOD, but also in a state of bliss and glory; for none, who are with CHRIST in GOD, can possibly be but in such a state. However this state will be highly exalted, our happiness and glory are to be greatly increased, when, after the Resurrection, our lives shall be no longer hid, but shall appear in all their lustre and splendor.

It must be observed here, that there are some, but I believe, and hope, very few, whose way of thinking and judging is so odd, that they imagine, and then assert, that the mind, during its separation from the body, is in a state of drowsiness and insensibility, as asleep. Sure, whoever can harbour such an opinion, must have a very scanty knowledge of the nature of the soul, of its wonderful activity and admirable faculties, as well as of the holy Scriptures. They must make the far more superior, the immortal, the noblest, and most excellent Being, that proceeds directly from the omnipotent Wisdom and Goodness, so dependant upon its inferior, upon a mortal and vile body, that the soul cannot act without it, cannot think, understand, will, and remember; unless it be prompted by inert matter, altogether incapable of itself of the least motion; and that GOD, the infinitely wise GOD, has so subjected that wonderful spirit, created in his own image, to the organs of the body it is united to, that without their assistance, it can neither think, nor perceive, nor see, nor hear, nor feel, nor distinguish, what is fit or unfit, agreeable or disagreeable to the whole person, though it is the chief part of it. They must blind themselves to a prodigious degree! for they have in themselves frequent demonstrative proofs, that their souls are active, perceiving, and sometimes very busy; that they see clearly, and hear

Proofs to the contrary.

distinctly, and converse with divers people, known and unknown, upon several subjects, that they read letters and books, speak surprisingly well, and feel pleasure and disquiet: and all these perceptions they have, when they are asleep and their five senses are shut up. Do not these things shew evidently, how independent souls may be on their bodies?

Now indeed the good will and pleasure of our most wise Creator is, that as long as they are united, they shall depend upon one another; especially, when their senses are awake, open, perceiving, and active. However, GOD is pleased to shew us in our sleep (the representative of Death) the superiority of our souls over our bodies; for it appears, that these cannot act and be sensible without their souls, but their souls can without their bodies; and will undoubtedly act with a vast deal more freedom, and an incomparably greater quickness; and will be much more sensible, when they are separated from them.

Our bodies must
be subject to our
souls.

IN the condition our bodies are now in, they are indeed very troublesome and galling clogs to our souls, but after their Resurrection, they will be noble and glorious partners to them; and that they may prove so, they must be subjected to our souls, their natural superiors, and be under their government, direction, and guidance; and in order to keep them in subjection, our souls must,

2 John ii. 16.
How watchful
our souls must be
over the lust of
the flesh.

First, Be very watchful over the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, St John speaks of. They must take a great deal of care to restrain the strong appetites, and very unruly passions, and keep them under, within due bounds; for were they let loose, they would soon hurry both our bodies and souls to all manner of mischiefs; the consequence of which would be, the privation of their present and future welfare, and their

their unexpressible calamity: Voluptuousness, covetousness, and ambition, whose very tempting objects are pleasures, riches and honours, or dignities. The last, generally attended with great credit and influence, interest and power, are very troublesome, importunate, and formidable adversaries to the true contentment of the mind, and its real happiness. However, they are not unconquerable. We may with courage, resolution, and perseverance, backed and supported with the divine assisting Grace, which is never denied to them that intreat for it; we may get the victory over them, and bring these craving and boisterous appetites and passions, under the government, direction, and guidance of our minds, that will at last shew manifestly to the flesh, to the eye, and to the life, that it is greatly their interest to shake off and renounce their lusts and their pride, that they are very pernicious to them; for they would soon or late afflict them with exquisite pains, cover them with shame, and expose them to the utmost contempt; and that besides these dismal effects, they would deprive the first of a blissful Resurrection, the second of the sight of an immortal glory, and its enjoying it; and the third, of an endless felicity: and therefore, that instead of walking after *the corruptions of the flesh*, they must walk after *the righteousness of the spirit*, that instead of giving themselves up to *rioting and drunkenness, to chambering and wantonness*, they must behave themselves decently, and *be holy in all manner of conversation*; that instead of betaking themselves to covetousness, which, far from bringing ease and contentment, brings disquiet and anxiety; they must look upon them such as they truly are, and we find them to be by our own experience, *viz.* vain and deceitful, very precarious and transitory; and that instead of cherishing pride and haughtiness,

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which draw flight and scorn, they must be meek and lowly, and their meekness and humility will get them benevolence, esteem, and exaltation.

How our souls
must dispose our
bodies and their
appetites, passions,
and inclinations.

Secondly, Our souls must dispose our bodies and their appetites, their passions and inclinations, to the peace and happiness of the society they are in, and strongly to press upon them all the virtues, that are apt to sweeten spirits and to allay animosities; and if it be possible, and as much as in them lies, to live peaceably with all men, and to be kind to them, even to our enemies; our souls must dispose them likewise to sympathize with one another in their joys and sorrows, *to mourn with them that mourn, and to rejoice with them that rejoice; to bear one another's burdens; and to forbear one another in love;* to be easy to be reconciled to them that have offended us. Whoever finds these happy dispositions in himself, and exercises them carefully, shall certainly reap the blessed fruits of them immediately after his Death; and after the last Judgement, he shall have the beautiful prospect, and the eternal enjoyment of an endless harvest of riches, delights and honours, which the more he gathers, the more he draws, and the more he receives; the more will they increase. We are therefore most powerfully induced to mind *whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of a good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, let us think on these things, and do them; and the God of peace shall be with us during this life, after our Death, and most eminently after the last Judgement.*

Rom. xii. 15.

Gal. vi. 2.

Eph. vi. 2.

Phil. iv. 8, 9.

S E C.

SECTION VII.

I MUST add here an argument, which I have taken out of an anonymous book, lately printed against those, who assert that the soul or mind, when it is separated from the body, is in a state of drowsiness and insensibility, and will continue in that state till the re-union of the soul to its body. This argument is, I think, unanswerable.

Another argument is added against the soul's drowsiness and insensibility, after its separation from the body.

“MAN is undoubtedly a Being compounded or consisting of a rational, living, and moral soul or mind, and of mere matter, an organized body made sensible by the soul. Man, with regard to his mind, is a member of the rational and eternal world, as well as a member, with regard to his body, of the sensible and temporal world. As such, he is capable of eating and drinking for its support, of moving from one place to another, and of recreating itself for a time: But man, as a member of the spiritual world, is only capable of being nourished by the word of God, and the inward light of the Spirit of truth, and the mental delights of his holiness, for ever. The true treasures of the mind, are the pure word of God, attended with glorious promises, and the inward light of the Holy Ghost, accompanied with unexpressible comforts, and a cherishing vigour to our reason; which will endure to all eternity. But the treasures of the body, are riches, power, dignities, and sensual pleasures. Man is as much a rational, living, conscious, and perceiving person, and a great deal more, without this body as with it. Their separation does not, and cannot, alter his spiritual nature, his power of thinking, perceiving, and acting.”

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THE reason is obvious, for the person cannot possibly be divided from his consciousness, from his rationality, from his perception, and his reason. The body, separated from his soul or mind, cannot be called, but very improperly, a man; but the human soul may be, and is, called very properly so. As the living souls, or rational persons have been, and are, and shall be created, to the end of this world, in the image of God, and have partaken, and continue to partake, and shall partake, in some degree and measure, of the light of the divine reason; they as necessarily exist, live, and perceive, without the body, as with it. By Death, the rational and perceiving part of man is only divided from his material and unperceiving part, and exists and lives in the spiritual world, as the material part exists, and is only extended in the sensible world; and so after the separation, the sensible body appears without life and motion in the sensible world, and the rational soul appears living, active, and perceiving in the spiritual world. *The spirit returneth to God that gave it,* and there it enjoys the omnipresent light, holiness, truth, and goodness of its CREATOR, in proportion to its improvement there. Ideas or perceptions are as essential to rational spirits, as extension and divisibility to matter.

THE soul or mind of man must be naturally active and vital, because to think and reason, without life and action, is impossible. Now to separate action from human minds, is to destroy them; not to act, and not to be, is the same thing with regard to minds. The understanding must have naturally a discerning light, and a reflecting power in it, or else the understanding could neither discern, nor judge, nor reflect. It is therefore as great an absurdity to talk of a rational spirit without an active reason, and the power of percep-

perception in it, as it is to talk of an human body without extension, solidity, and palpableness. A rational or reasoning spirit must naturally live and perceive, or else be annihilated. There can be no medium. If a man can see and discern the divine light of truth, and the beauty of virtue, holiness, and piety, through the veil of his body, much more and much clearer will he be able to discern them, when the veil of his body is taken off; and so, good, sincere, and upright souls, will see and discern with unexpressible joy and satisfaction the glorious light of truth, and the amiable beauty of holiness; and enjoy delightfully the blessed fruits of goodness, sincerity, uprightness, and piety; but the false, the crafty, the uncharitable, and unjust men, shall see, with great grief, anxiety, and torment, the deformity, ugliness, horror, impurity, of their vices, and reap the bitter, nauseous, and pernicious fruits of them.

SECTION VIII.

NOW to return to the intermediate state of departed good souls, St Paul could not, I think be more express concerning it, than he is in his epistle to the Hebrews; wherein he mentions many holy persons, who were justified by Faith. There he says, *All these, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, i. e. the promise of the Messiah; God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect, after the Resurrection.* It may be added here, that even St Paul himself and his fellow-apostles, shall not be made perfect without us, and without all the righteous souls that exist now, and shall exist to the end of the world; when, after the last Judgement, our most glorious Chief shall put himself at the head of

The intermediate happy state of departed good souls proved by St Paul, Heb. xi. 39, 40.

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of the blessed, and introduce them triumphantly into the kingdom prepared for them by the omnipotent Goodness and Wisdom from the foundation of the world; wherein they shall see God face to face, and enjoy for ever that inexhaustible source of felicity and glory.

Noah, and all the faithful before the flood and since; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the holy Prophets, and all good people, have waited; so must the righteous souls departed, so must our own souls, and all the pious souls that shall depart, to the end of this world, wait till after the last Judgement, before they and we be made compleatly happy and glorious.

WHEN the present souls depart from this gloomy wretched world, they are carried into other states, the Good to a state of rest, of light and bliss, called sometimes Abraham's Bosom, and sometimes Paradise; and the Bad to a state of great uneasiness, of fear and anxiety, of darkness and misery, till they come to Judgement.

THE middle state of the faithful, is a state of passage to a state of incomparably fuller happiness and higher glory. The ministring angels convey their souls from this world to that temporary state of triumph, peace, joy, and happiness: but it will be our blessed Lord alone, who will lead both our bodies and souls into the blissful and most glorious presence of his most holy everlasting Father, and to our inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

1 Pet. i. 4

Now, the true and only way to be led by our most glorious HEAD, after the last Judgement, into the ever blessed gracious Presence of the omnipotent everlasting Father, who so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life; that true and only way is then

John iii. 16.
The only way to
be led by our glo-
rious HEAD into
the kingdom of
heaven.

then to believe in HIM, and to do our best endeavours to conform our present lives to the holy precepts of his Gospel, that exhorts us to a sincere repentance of our sins, and strongly recommends us to love GOD with all our heart, and to practice *Charity, the bond of perfectness*, towards our neighbours; that is, towards all mankind. If we perform these things, we may assure ourselves, that our souls, when they are separated from these our bodies, shall be directly conveyed into the abode of the Blessed, wherein we shall rest from our labours, and enjoy continually the amiable company of the holy angels and of the righteous souls departed, and that shall depart; and now and then the most desirable presence of our glorious Lord and Saviour, till the general Resurrection, and the re-union of every soul to its respective body. Then shall we be all, angels and men, both good and bad, summoned before the most tremendous Judgement-seat of our most supreme Judge, who is GOD and man; and irrevocable sentences shall be passed on the right hand and on the left of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and shall be executed without delay.

Col. iii. 14.

Rev. xiv. 13.

THE Righteous on the right hand shall attend their great Lord into his and their most glorious and most blissful kingdom, purchased to them by HIM, there to reign for ever and ever. As to the others on the left hand, they shall be conducted whither the Almighty shall be pleased to direct.

I must add this other consideration, it is concerning our LORD JESUS CHRIST's present government, and his future Judgement of the world. His present government is over the whole world, especially over the whole Church of GOD. This requires an omniscience, an almighty power, an omnipresence.

Another consideration concerning our LORD JESUS CHRIST's present government, and his future judgement, that requires an omniscience, an almighty power, an omnipresence.

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The reasons thereof.

And omniscience, that he may know the states and needs of all his rational creatures, especially of all his faithful servants; and an almighty power, that he may answer their petitions; and an omnipresence, that he may hear them in all the corners of the earth, and in all the parts of the seas. These three divine perfections are necessary in our blessed Lord, supreme Governor and Judge, that he may judge of all our wants and supply them accordingly, and that he may assist us in all emergencies, in all dangers, and against all temporal and spiritual enemies, and then at last crown us with eternal glory.

And besides, who can raise all the dead from the beginning of this world to its end, and place them all, without exception, before his Judgement-seat? none but the omnipotent, the omniscient, and the omnipresent God. Now when they are placed there, what immense knowledge must not our supreme Judge have? None but the searcher of all hearts, that has been, that is, and that shall be; none but an omniscient God can possibly bring every secret thought and work into Judgement. No other can *bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and render to every man according to his deeds.* Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his GREATNESS is unsearchable!

SUCH due considerations as these must be of great weight to them who are not wedded and enslaved to the precarious and transitory riches, pleasures, and honours of this world, who have a serious sense of the Christian Religion, and truly believe another life. If we would but now and then look inwardly, examine what passes within us, and consult our inward man and his constant attendant, our CONSCIENCE, we should soon be convinced, that this inward man of ours, *created*

1 Cor. iv. 5,

Rom. ii. 6.

Psal. cxi. 3.

The above-mentioned considerations must be of great weight to them who are not wedded to this world, and have a serious sense of the Christian Religion.

INTERMEDIATE STATE, &c.

in Christ and after God, created in righteousness and true holiness, is of the utmost importance to our present and future welfare, that it is impossible for us to enjoy any real happiness in this world, and in the next; unless he be in peace with us, unless he be easy and quiet within us; unless he be pleased with our lives and conduct; and we should soon be convinced that our outward man, our flesh and its appetites, inclinations, and affections, which we so much indulge, and are so fond of, and anxious for; that our outward man is not to be compared with the inward man; for this is immortal, and capable of a never-ceasing glory and happiness, but the other is a poor mortal thing, liable to all manner of weaknesses and infirmities, and capable only of giving us transitory, precarious, and very short pleasures and satisfactions.

Eph. ii. 10,
—iv. 24.

Unless our inward man, and his constant attendant, our Conscience, be in peace, easy, and quiet within us, we can enjoy no true, no real happiness in this world nor in the next.

THE CONCLUSION.

OH! that every one of those, who actually enjoy earthly ease, quiet, and plenty! That every one of the rich and dignified men, especially, would seriously consider, that when his rational soul, his inward man is stripped of his outward circumstances, of his fleshly veil, his body; he must immediately either enter into and partake of much happier and more glorious circumstances, and much clearer enjoyment of the gracious divine presence; or enter into, and partake of dismal circumstances, and the presence of an incensed God, than which nothing could be worse! O that they would duly consider these things betimes!

Is it not a most melancholy prospect to see men enjoying plenty of every good thing, and riches, and dignities, to see them live and die in luxury,

luxury, as if they really thought there are no such things as rational faculties, or rational life, and a rational supreme Judge, before whom they must give account of their thoughts and desires, of their words and actions. **O** the deceitfulness of ease and riches, of the allurements of this corrupt world, and withal, the wiles of the Devil working upon our carnal appetites and affections! How is it possible that under the light, the clear light of the Gospel; they should be persuaded to throw away their immortal, their most precious souls for mere trifles, toys, gew-gaws, which they are sure they must soon part with? I say throw away, because they may preserve these precious souls for ever, and keep them with dignity to their unexpressible advantage, and improve their noble faculties to their great credit and honour: That they may do, and yet enjoy the innocent pleasures of this life, and indulge the delights of their senses, provided they be kept within moderate and reasonable bounds. *Awake, ye that sleep in sin, and arise unto sobriety, righteousness, and piety, looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our blessed Lord, and Christ, says St Paul, shall give you light*; yes, he shall give you light both in this life and after Death, even to all eternity; when your bodies shall be raised again, and your souls shall be re-united to them; but then it will be a complete light in the kingdom of heaven.

Eph. v. 14.

